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MONTHLY REVIEW

AN INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST MAGAZINE

40 YEARS AFTER

THE EDITORS

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7

THE LABOR PARTY FACES POWER

KONNI ZILLIACUS

*Spider Webs, Drugs, And
The Nature Of Man* PHILIP MORRISON

EDITORS . . . LEO HUBERMAN . . . PAUL M. SWEENEY

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

By the time this issue reaches readers, Paul Sweezy will be in Moscow as the guest of VOKS (the Soviet society for cultural relations with foreign countries) attending the celebration of the fortieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution. After spending a week in Moscow and Leningrad, Sweezy will visit a number of countries in Eastern and Western Europe on the way back and will, of course, write about his experiences for MR.

Scott and Helen Nearing's new book, *Socialists Around the World*, will be published by Monthly Review Press around the middle of January at a price of \$3. Until then, but only until then, it can be obtained at the special prepublication price of \$2. Need we say that this latest work of the Nearings will make an ideal Christmas present from, for, and to socialists of all shades and nuances? For the complete table of contents, see page 239 of this issue.

Last month we told you about an article which we have received from Professor D. Fedotov, Director of the Institute of Psychiatry in the Soviet Ministry of Health, giving the Soviet view of psychoanalysis. We are holding this up a bit longer so as to be able to publish with it a reply by an American analyst. Like many of our readers (we suspect), we have an open mind on this subject and feel that it is likely to be more useful at this stage to have arguments pro and con placed side by side.

The article by Joshua Kunitz on forty years of Soviet culture also scheduled for November, will appear in a later issue.

One of the greatest difficulties in the way of publishing left books is

(continued on inside back cover)

FORTY YEARS LATER

The month of November marks the fortieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution, and by the time this issue of *MONTHLY REVIEW* reaches its readers an appropriately elaborate celebration will be under way in Moscow. The theme of Soviet spokesmen will doubtless be the great victories and achievements of these four decades. The victories and achievements are in truth staggering to the imagination, and everyone who has shared in making them possible has a right to feel proud and happy. Nor is the occasion one from which non-Soviet citizens need feel excluded. The Russian Revolution, like the American Revolution in its time, opened one of the great chapters of the human story; it is an event which we should all, regardless of our parochial cares and interests, gladly join in commemorating. Speaking for ourselves and we hope for the vast majority of *MR* readers, we both rejoice on this historic occasion and extend our heartiest congratulations to the real heroes of the Russian Revolution, the Soviet people who have fought the battles, borne the burdens, and are already beginning to reap the rewards of these arduous years.

And yet we would be less than candid if we gave the impression that our feelings are entirely those of joy and satisfaction. An anniversary is an occasion for looking forward as well as backward, and as we scan the horizon of the future we can see all too clearly that the road before the Soviet Union is beset with obstacles and pitfalls which no socialist, back in the hopeful days of 1917, would have imagined in existence forty years after the Revolution. If, as seems likely, human beings have a natural tendency to overoptimism in times of great change, this in itself is no cause for despair. But what is disconcerting is the nature of these obstacles and pitfalls, for some of the most formidable seem to be products of the Revolution itself which show few comforting signs of disappearing as the years pass by.

The great problems before the Soviet Union are not scientific or technological, or even economic. The successful launching of a space satellite by Soviet scientists on October 4th dramatically symbolizes what we have long maintained, that a planned socialist society has an enormous advantage over chaotic capitalism in all matters having to do with man's utilization of his material environment. It is true that the USSR is still behind the advanced capitalist countries in economic development, but this is a time lag pure and simple, and on any historically relevant scale a very short one too. The Soviet

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Union already leads the world in natural resources and trained manpower, and it will be a matter of a few years only—say a couple of decades at the outside—before these “original factors of production,” as the classical economists used to call them, will translate themselves into the world’s highest level of per capita production. And the gap, once opened, will grow steadily wider—unless and until the erstwhile leading economic nations discard their crazy-quilt system in favor of rational socialist planning.*

All this, we repeat, is merely a matter of time, and if the triumph of economic planning were the inevitable prelude and guarantee of a good society to come, then we could say with gratitude in our hearts that this fortieth anniversary of the Russian Revolution marks the beginning of the truly human phase of mankind’s evolution.

Unfortunately, there are no such inevitabilities and guarantees in history, and what once looked like a strong probability now seems more doubtful and problematical. Soviet socialism is harnessing science and technology to economic ends with unprecedented success; but it has not created a good society. And, on the basis of the evidence before us, we may well wonder whether the present leadership, trained and hardened in the harsh years of war and dictatorship, has not forgotten that a good society is after all the purpose of socialism and scientific-economic achievement merely a means to that end.

A good society? What is it? How can one talk so glibly of so complex and controversial a subject? We have no ready definitions, and we are sure that the good society, if and when it comes, will not meet the specifications of any blueprint. But some things we do know, and our knowledge comes not only from our own reason but from the accumulated wisdom of nearly two centuries of creative socialist

* This paragraph was written before the publication of James Reston’s interview with Khrushchev in the *New York Times* of October 10th. In answering a question as to how he, Khrushchev, pictures the Soviet Union and the world forty years from now, the Soviet leader revealed the supreme self-confidence of the new social order of which he was acting as spokesman: “It is difficult, of course, to foresee all the zigzags of history, but it can be said about the fundamental line of development that in conditions of peace the Soviet Union will, in a shorter period than forty years, by virtue of the difference in the rate of development of our countries, leave the United States of America far behind in the level of industrial and agricultural production per head of population, if the United States develops along capitalist lines. In our country, the level of productive forces will be immeasurably higher than now. All the conditions will have been created for manufacturing an abundance of various goods and products. Working hours will have been reduced to a minimum, since science and engineering will have made considerable progress. In short, our country will assuredly develop in accordance with Marxist-Leninist teachings about the building of a Communist society.” In our judgment, this is 100 percent right.

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thought.* We know, for example, that the good society is one of cooperation and brotherhood in which no group monopolizes power or enjoys special privileges. We know that it is a society in which all citizens have the right to be informed, to make up their own minds, and to participate effectively in making and carrying out the decisions that control their lives. And we know that unless these conditions are fulfilled, all other gains a society may make in the economic and cultural realms are insecure and in a measure tainted. Privileged minorities can *never* be trusted: their very privileges distort their outlook and their ability to comprehend the common welfare. Leadership in the good society must not only spring from the people; *it must also live the life of the people*. Lenin saw this perfectly clearly, as did Marx and many of the great socialist thinkers before him. It remains as true today as it ever was.

Neither capitalism nor Soviet socialism fulfills these conditions, though we cannot condemn either on this account alone. All too often, in a world of evil, our criterion of judgment must be not the existence of good but the potentiality of good. Using *this* yardstick, however, we not only can but must reject capitalism categorically and unconditionally. It has no potentiality of good; at its very foundation lies the assumption that wealth, which is merely a generalized form of power and privilege, is essential to order and progress. If we accept capitalism we abandon all hope of the good society and with it the noblest dreams of mankind.

The case of the USSR is quite different. Its theoretical foundation, derived from Marx and Lenin, remains socialist, egalitarian, and democratic—as witness its catchwords and mottos: from each according to his ability, to each according to his need; the free development of each as the condition for the free development of all; the withering away of the state; and so on. But Soviet practice is something else again. True, it remains resolutely socialist in the economic sphere, and this accounts for the enormous material advances of recent years. But it contains little egalitarianism and even less democracy. The leadership is self-chosen and self-perpetuating; enjoying the good things of life, it leads an existence quite apart from the masses; it tells the people only what it wants them to hear and imposes its will through its monopoly of economic and political power. In short, the Soviet Union is a dictatorship, but not the dictatorship of the proletariat over the old exploiting classes of Marxian theory. Forty years after the Revolution, these classes have disappeared, and the proletariat obviously has no control over the government. The

* To those who would dip into this storehouse of accumulated wisdom, we highly recommend G. D. H. Cole's *History of Socialist Thought*, of which four volumes have appeared to date, bringing the story up to 1914.

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dictatorship is that of the Party over the people.* The conflict between Soviet theory and Soviet practice is radical and far-reaching.

This state of the facts will hardly be challenged by any serious student of Soviet affairs. What has been and will continue to be debated by well-informed persons is the long-run implications of these facts. Is the dictatorship merely the other side of the centralized planning coin? Or is it, from a socialist standpoint, an aberration stemming from the Russian past and the ever-present threat and repeated actuality of foreign intervention?

As readers of MR know, we have consistently answered no to the first of these questions and yes to the second. We do not believe that dictatorship and planning are Siamese twins; we do believe that the historical setting of the world's first socialist revolution *inevitably* gave rise to a ruthless dictatorship. And in the past we have always tended to draw the conclusion that when the conditions which produced the dictatorship—economic backwardness and international insecurity—had been overcome, the Soviet regime would, in some unspecified manner, democratize itself. The great question now is: will it, and how?

This question is no longer a purely theoretical one. The conditions which produced the dictatorship *have* been overcome. The Soviet Union is no longer a backward country and is rapidly overtaking the most advanced. Internationally, it is at least as secure as any nation in the world. Our theory is being put to the crucial test of practice. And so far—let us face it frankly—there is precious little evidence to confirm it.

It is true that the rigors of the dictatorship have been moderated, and this is all to the good. But it is also true that even the mildest of dictatorships is not a democracy. In all that has happened since Stalin's death we can find nothing to indicate that the Communist Party, or any of its contending factions, has changed in the slightest degree its view of the proper relation between the people and their leadership. That view, to put it baldly, is one of "Papa knows best," and there is apparently no thought that the infant Soviet people will ever grow up enough to decide for itself who knows best and hence who should make and administer the policies which determine its fate. Nor is this attitude confined to the political sphere: Khrushchev's recent pronouncements on the policy of the party and the government toward art are in the best (or worst) Stalinist style.

The time may not yet have come to chuck the voluntary demo-

* To avoid misunderstanding, it ought perhaps to be added parenthetically that this does *not* mean the dictatorship of a "new class": the Party is a self-renewing group which recruits from all strata of Soviet society and has none of the essential hereditary characteristics of a class.

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cratization theory completely, but at any rate it is not too soon to be thinking in terms of alternative theories. And the most plausible would seem to be that forty years is too long for a dictatorship to remain temporary. The Soviet Communist Party has gotten used to its power and privileges: tenacious habits of mind have been acquired; a thoroughly anti-democratic ideology (the metaphysical doctrine of the unity between party and people) has had time to set. It may well be that the leading circles in the Soviet Union are now prisoners of their past successes and, in their own way, are as blind to the needs of the future as the ruling classes of the capitalist countries. If this turns out to be so—and the next few years will almost certainly provide the answer—we shall have to abandon once and for all the optimistic theory of a smooth transition to socialist democracy in the Soviet bloc. In the meantime, we had better get busy and study the implications of an entrenched dictatorship operating within the enormously dynamic framework of a socialist economy.

This poses a difficult set of problems, and none of the theories that have been put forward so far provide much help in tackling them. Communists, unfortunately, are incapable of thinking rationally about the Soviet Union. Bourgeois experts either refuse to look beyond their noses or take refuge in the comforting illusion that socialism or dictatorship or both are incompatible with human nature and so are bound to come to no good end—which presumably means that somewhere along the line the Soviet-bloc countries will join the “free world.” The Trotskyites have come closest to defining the problem correctly, but their solution (an anti-bureaucratic revolution of the Soviet masses) is part wishful thinking and part sheer revolutionary romanticism. The beginning of wisdom is to recognize that the immutabilities of human nature have nothing to do with the case, and that the masses are not going to revolt against a system that works as well as the Soviet system no matter how undemocratic the government may be.

But where does this leave us? With the conclusion that everything will remain as is—or, in the language of the fairy tales, that everyone will live unhappily ever after?

Hardly. The rapid economic evolution of the Soviet economy is transforming Soviet society, creating new interest groups, strengthening others, opening up new perspectives in such varied realms as housing, city planning, the utilization of leisure, and many more. At the same time the relaxation of the Stalinist terror, which had held the society in balance, is giving the various groups and strata of Soviet society the opportunity to press their claims through party and governmental channels. Under these circumstances, the dictatorship is certain to be subjected to increasingly heavy strains at the

top as the competing interests push and pull their way toward the levers of power. The crisis of last June which resulted in the ouster from the leadership of Malenkov, Molotov, and Kaganovich is only a sample of what is sure to happen again and again as long as the present setup lasts.

No society can remain indefinitely in such a state of chronic crisis. A stabilization will have to be sought in one direction or another. And, so far as we can now see, there are only three possible lines of development.

(1) The first and most obvious would be a return to Stalinist-type terror. This certainly may be tried, but in our judgment it is not apt to succeed, if only because those who seek to consolidate their position by reviving the power of the secret police are likely to be thwarted by the superior power of the military.

(2) This points to the second possibility, which we discussed at some length in last month's Review of the Month, namely, the gradual building up of the power of the Red Army, leading eventually to the establishment of a full-fledged military dictatorship. That this is a very real danger was shown by the sharp rise in Marshall Zhukov's stock which resulted from the most recent inner-party crisis. We do not suggest that this would be a permanent solution, but it might last quite a while, especially if the international situation remains tense.

(3) The third possibility is that some or all of the competing factions among the leadership might, each for its own reasons and to promote its own interests, appeal increasingly for the support of public opinion as a means of getting the upper hand over rivals. There is no doubt that the Soviet Communist Party has always been sensitive to public opinion, but in the past the purpose has been to mold and manipulate it rather than to win its support. This could change fairly rapidly, however, if several evenly matched groups became engaged in a drawn-out struggle for power, or if the civilian leadership as a whole felt threatened by the military. In either case, public opinion would acquire a political weight which it has never yet possessed in the Soviet Union (or, of course, in pre-revolutionary Russia).

Such a development, it seems to us, might be the beginning of a slow but genuine process of democratization, analogous perhaps to that which resulted in the conquest of civil and political rights by the masses in bourgeois society during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. It is an intriguing thought that in order to understand the political evolution of the Soviet Union in the second half of the twentieth century, we could perhaps do no better than study the nineteenth-century process by which the British masses, taking

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advantage of the struggles between landlord and capitalist, Liberal and Tory, Irishman and Englishman, gradually wrested an incomplete but nonetheless real democracy from what had originally been an extremely narrow and brutal class dictatorship. In saying this, we are not suggesting that "history repeats itself," but only that if you are perceptive or lucky enough to know which lessons of history to study you may gain extremely valuable insight into the trends of the present and the outlook for the future.

We are quite frank to admit that all this is in the nature of tentative suggestions which will need a good deal more thought and testing before they can be accepted as elements of a usable theory. For the present, as we celebrate the achievements of the first forty years of the Soviet experiment, we can only say that the outlook for the immediate future is clear in some respects and cloudy and uncertain in others. Scientifically, technologically, and economically, the USSR has already proved to the hilt what socialists have always maintained about the inherent superiority of socialist planning over capitalist anarchy. But in terms of human relations, Soviet socialism is still back at the beginning of the long road that leads to the good society.

Finally, a word, in addition to congratulations, to any Soviet readers who may chance to see these lines. You may think that our insistence on the importance of democracy is an example of "rotten liberalism." It isn't. The founding fathers of Marxism were scathingly critical of bourgeois democracy, but because it was (and still is) bourgeois, not because it was democratic. It is true that within the framework of capitalist society, the masses can never do more than choose which exploiters shall represent them; but even that choice is important (when the exploiters get together, the exploitation is much more thorough). It is true, too, that bourgeois democracy is a fraud in the sense that it presupposes that the masses will be misled and misinformed by capitalist-controlled media of communication and education; but it should hardly be necessary to labor the point that the remedy is to tell the people the truth, not to deprive them of their power to choose. No, democracy is neither an invention of the devil nor a liberal trick. Quite the contrary, the discoverers of the principles of true democracy were none other than Marx and Engels: by separating it from its capitalist shell they were the first to show the glorious future of *socialist* democracy.

You have achieved a socialist society. The next step is to achieve democracy. In doing so, you will not only be making the Soviet Union into a vastly better place to live, you will also be infusing new hope and strength into all sections of the socialist movement the world over.

(October 12, 1957)

THE GREAT DIVIDE

BY JOSEPH CLARK

A Leningrad student told me something shortly after I arrived in the Soviet Union in 1950 which illustrated in a small way a big aspect of the Russian Revolution. We were walking by a big building and the young man pointed to it, smiling, as he said: "This used to be the stock exchange. Now it's a maritime museum. That's a pretty good use for a stock exchange, don't you think?"

Yes, I was then and still am impressed by an economic system which not only exists without a stock exchange, but makes far more rapid progress in production than it did when it was blessed with one.

At the Lenin museum in the city where the Soviets were born, they've preserved the old armored car from which Lenin addressed the Petrograd workers on his arrival from Finland. Crude letters inscribed at the time still spell out a message up near the turret, reading: "Enemy of Capital." And in all the re-examination I've made after learning belatedly about the evils of Stalinism I have not been able to discover any restoration of capital in the USSR. Nor can I find the "new class" which Milovan Djilas writes about, in an economic sense.

A new bureaucracy? Yes. A degenerative process that set in as socialism was being built in a single, very backward country? Yes. The rise of Stalin to autocratic power and the ruthless deformation of socialist concepts of justice, morality, equality, and freedom? Yes. But a "new class" which appropriates the social product from the workers and uses, enjoys, and disposes of this product in any manner it pleases, as Djilas argues? That you won't find in Russia, or in China, Yugoslavia, and Poland.

Nor is this idle hair splitting. It involves the lasting role of the socialist revolution of 1917. If a new exploiting class is in power in Russia, counter-revolution has triumphed. Then the Trotskyist slogan of a new "workers' revolution" in Russia (and China, Yugoslavia, Poland) would have validity. But it hasn't. Brilliant as was Trotsky's analysis of the rise of bureaucracy in Russia and his forecast of degeneration in the Soviet state, his slogan of "workers' revolution"

The author, who was Moscow correspondent of the Daily Worker from August, 1950, to June, 1953, recently resigned from the Communist Party.

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can only impede the steady struggle to eliminate the remaining baleful legacy of Stalinism. That slogan can become confused—and has been in actual politics—with George Kennan's old "containment" policy and the Dulles "liberation" crusade.

I've asked myself many times why I was blind to most of the evils of Stalinism during the nearly three years I spent in the Soviet Union as *Daily Worker* correspondent. I find small consolation in the fact that much wiser people—Hyman Levy, the Webbs, to name but a few—also missed this terrible, dark side of Soviet development. But certainly one reason lies in the continuing viability of the 1917 revolution. Even the critical observer who wore no rose-colored glasses and who knew of the repressions, the awful penal camps, the frame-ups, would have to concede certain fundamental facts about Soviet society:

(1) That this woefully underdeveloped country, whose poverty was a factor in its distorted development after the revolution, has become a highly industrialized state. Without in any way condoning the terrible price in human life and loss of freedom paid for this industrialization, and without suggesting that such is the socialist path for underdeveloped countries, it is a fact that Soviet society developed modern industry, technology, science. Today this has become a basis for eliminating the Stalinist legacy.

(2) That the socialist revolution has accomplished an enormous cultural transformation. This starts with the elimination of illiteracy and includes mass dissemination of scientific, artistic, and cultural achievements among the people. Small indications of great changes constantly come to mind. I remember a walk in a field of rye where peasant girls were toiling. From afar I saw that one of them had hammered a piece of paper to a tree. When I came closer I found that it was a creditable drawing of Pushkin, and a line from his poetry was scribbled underneath. Looking through the books in the library of the newsprint plant in the small town of Pravdinsk on the Volga, I was struck by a translation of Proust's *Remembrance of Things Past*. The card in the back of each volume showed that it had been constantly in circulation. And I often recall the Soviet kids who played hookey from school to see "Swan Lake."

(3) That even after nearly 30 years of Stalinism a fundamental attribute of Soviet socialism still operated in world affairs—the quest for peace. This too has been distorted, true enough. The despicable campaign against Yugoslavia, the failure to see earlier the positive contribution of the neutral nations, the stupidity of the Berlin blockade, the failure to pursue a settlement in Korea earlier along the lines that were finally accepted—these and many other Soviet policies contributed to the cold war which Truman inaugurated at Hiroshima

and Nagasaki. The fundamental need of Soviet society, however, remained peace. With all its failings, Soviet foreign policy was predicated on peaceful coexistence.

On this 40th anniversary of the Soviet Revolution mankind stands at a great divide. It is quite different from the turning point which Marx and Engels saw in 1848 or which Lenin envisaged in 1918. Marx and Engels wrote in 1848 that Germany was on the eve of a bourgeois revolution which was bound to be the prelude to an immediately following proletarian revolution. Lenin wrote in 1918 that the World War was not only leading Russia but the whole world to a world proletarian revolution.

The historic watershed we've arrived at would seem to be something else, although related generally to the vision of Marx and Lenin. The defeat of Hitlerism and the rise of two systems of states following the Chinese Revolution have posed the real possibility of peaceful coexistence and elimination of war. Perhaps it results, in this atomic age, from the fact that both sides have hydrogen bombs and are in the process of attaching them to intercontinental missiles. Nevertheless, and despite the cruel small wars, despite the big cold war and its continuing threat of atomic destruction, there is the realizable prospect of eliminating war in an era when civilization itself could be destroyed by war. Both sides must lose in war.

Nor does peaceful coexistence eliminate the possibility of a world-wide socialist development. Come it must, not through war but through the elimination of war. The revolt against Stalinism within the Communist movement gives promise of a new revival of socialist thought and organization in the Western world. This same trend can also restore the democratic and humanist basis of socialism in the Communist countries. Nothing would contribute more to this process than achieving detente between East and West.

**HAVE YOU
JOINED THE
ASSOCIATES YET?**

THE LABOR PARTY FACES POWER

BY KONNI ZILLIACUS

The British Labor Party Conference in Brighton at the end of September and the beginning of October was held when the Conservative government had reached the half-way point in its five-year term of office. Theoretically, having been elected on May 26, 1955, it could continue until the same date in 1960. But few expect the government to run its full term. The autumn of 1959 is regarded as the most likely date for the next general election. Whenever it comes, Gallup polls and bye-elections alike reveal such a commanding, sustained, and increasing lead for Labor that even the Tories privately concede us the victory.

It was this prospect of facing the electors and winning power in the near future that formed the political background to the Brighton Conference. The effect was, of course, to damp down dissension and dispose the Party to close its ranks, rally behind its leaders, and accept their policies. This was so convenient to the right-wing of the leadership that the idea was sedulously fostered that we might be facing an election next fall, or even in the spring. But that is mere wishful thinking.

On the other hand the economic background to the Conference was the deepening class conflict between the workers on the one side and the employers supported by the Government on the other. The 7 percent bank rate symbolizes the victory of the right-wing Tory toughs over their slightly more progressive, or at least more timid, colleagues, and their determination to apply the old-fashioned capitalist remedies for inflation—throttle down production, lower wages, and produce unemployment. Before the last war, when there had been chronic mass unemployment as far back as anyone could remember, the workers took this kind of thing as all in the day's work—or rather, the day's lack of work—and resigned themselves to the resultant loss of bargaining power. There was a good deal of fatalism and apathy about unemployment.

But now there is a generation of younger workers who have never known unemployment, regard getting a job as their natural right which it is the duty of the state to provide, and would blame the

The author, a Labor Member of Parliament, is a frequent contributor to MR. His latest book, published last spring, is A New Birth of Freedom?

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government for unemployment and get very tough indeed in defending their standards of living and right to work. A new trade-union leadership is arising that reflects this mood and is conscious of the great power wielded by organized labor. Its chief representative is Frank Cousins, the leader of the mammoth (1,300,000 members) Transport and General Workers Union, and a man with firm socialist convictions.

It was the interplay of these two factors—the prospect of an election playing up loyalty to the leaders, particularly in the constituency parties, and the impact of Tory economic policies producing militancy, particularly in the unions—that shaped the decisions taken at the Conference. Those decisions go a long way to provide the Party with the domestic, colonial, and foreign policies, and the facts and arguments to make the case for them, that it needs to win the election and do its job competently afterwards.

But on one of two crucial points—how to stop inflation—the Party has no policy as yet; and on the other—what to do about the hydrogen bomb—the leadership took a line at Brighton that is simply not accepted by a large section of the rank and file. But before discussing these two crucial points and the relation between them, let us survey the decisions that do command the assent of the overwhelming majority of the Party and will certainly be acted upon by the next Labor government.

Repeal of the 1957 Rent Act and the municipalization of 6 million rent-controlled houses are proposals that bring out sharply the antithetical philosophies of the Conservative and Labor Parties. For forty years, successive governments have tried, in true British fashion, to deal with the problem of housing by rule-of-thumb, patch-work, and piecemeal legislation, designed to temper the wind of the landlord's rapacity to the shorn tenant by putting a ceiling on rents for all houses below a certain rateable value. By now, the resulting body of laws has reached a degree of labyrinthine complexity, shot through with anomalies and obscurities, that calls urgently for some clear and comprehensive measure to cut the Gordian knot.

The 1957 Rent Act tackles this problem the Tory way: looking at it from the landlord's point of view that houses are an investment and giving a free hand to private profit-making enterprise, it provides for progressive de-control until all tenants are once more left to the tender mercies of the landlords, as in the good old days of slums and unemployment. Labor's policy is equally clear-cut: providing homes for people who cannot afford to buy them is a social service, it says. Therefore local authorities, who already build and own and let at cost nearly 3 million so-called council houses, should take over all rent-controlled houses. The former owners will be compensated and the

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houses will be reconditioned by the local authorities from funds advanced by the state. Rents will then cover interest and sinking fund on these monies, as well as the maintenance of the houses. Ultimately this operation will pay for itself, but initially the state will have to pay out some £200 million.

Pensions and superannuation was the second major measure approved by the Brighton Conference with little or no dissent. The basic old age pension is to be raised from the present £2 to £3 a week with provision for adjustment to eventual rises in the cost of living. In addition, a compulsory national superannuation scheme will be introduced, which when in full operation will mean that everyone who has been in the scheme from the moment he or she starts work will, after working for forty years, draw a pension equal to half his or her pay. In the main this scheme will be contributory, paid for by employers (public or private) and employees. But the contribution of the state will rise from the £70 million being paid for the present pension scheme to some £200 million.

The first major controversy at the Conference broke out over the National Executive's report entitled *Industry and Society*. This able document reflects the views of Hugh Gaitskell and the academically trained Keynesian economists around him, and their conception of election strategy. The analysis in the first part shows that more than half of the country's economy is controlled by some 500 giant firms, with over £2.5 million capital each, and shares so widely distributed as to leave the shareholders functionless. The conclusion drawn is that the state should acquire shares, eventually a majority, in these firms and impose controls and public accountability on them. Further nationalization—except for the re-nationalization of the steel industry and of long-distance road haulage, to which Labor is already pledged—would be resorted to only in cases where an inquiry reveals that it would be in the public interest to nationalize the enterprise concerned. A. A. Berle's saying, in *The 20th Century Capitalist Revolution*, that "the capital is there; and so is capitalism. The wanting factor is the capitalist," is twice quoted with approval.

This whole conception of giant firms no longer having a class axe to grind because their shareholders have become "functionless"—the managers who run the firms, are assumed to be socially neutral and concerned only with efficiency, and to be able readily to fit in with and serve the public interest—has been subjected to a deadly analysis by a group of young Marxist economists in a pamphlet published by the newly founded *Universities and Left Review*. They have no difficulty in proving that so far from fading away, Big Business, through interlocking directorates composed of an inner ring of very big shareholders and enormously wealthy men, is very much in charge

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of the giant firms and in no mood to play kiss in the ring with our academic right wingers, who don't want to scare the "floating voter" by even giving capitalism an old-fashioned socialist look, let alone getting tough with Big Business.

The floor of the Conference may not have been technically equipped to refute the view of contemporary capitalism taken in *Industry and Society*, even if the five-minute time limit had not made it impossible to make any serious criticism. But the general feeling was expressed by a young delegate, a newcomer, who said the report reminded him of the time his mother sent the cat to the butcher and in due course got it back with a bill "for altering the cat." Pause. Puzzled silence. "I'm afraid if the Party adopts this report, it's going to lose its fundamentals." His timing was perfect and the Conference roared.

The reference back of the Report, moved in a powerful speech by Jim Campbell, Secretary of the National Union of Railwaymen, was lost by a big majority. But in order to save face in spite of the militant mood of the overwhelming majority of the Conference, the right-wing leaders on the National Executive had to concede a good deal. Frank Cousins for the Transport Workers, Bill Carron for the Engineers, Ernest Jones for the Miners, all supported the report—on condition it was made clear by Gaitskell, in replying, that it was an addition to and not a substitute for nationalizing major industries. They also staked out their claims—Cousins said his union would not be satisfied with merely re-nationalizing long-distance road haulage; they wanted more far-reaching measures in this field. Carron made it clear that the Amalgamated Engineering Union, which is part of the powerful Confederation of Shipbuilding and Engineering Workers, stands by the plan of the latter (which will be presented to and accepted by the Trade Union Congress next year) to nationalize key sections of the engineering industry such as the manufacture of machine tools, and also the aircraft industry.

The finishing touch to Labor's colonial policy was put with the National Executive's report promising self-government immediately and self-determination to Cyprus within five years of Labor's assuming office. Labor is now pledged to a colonial policy that looks to developing democracy and self-government and raising the standards of living, health, and education in colonial dependencies, with the object of granting them full independence at the earliest possible moment. One percent of the gross national income, about £160 million, will be spent annually for these purposes.

In foreign affairs, the Brighton Conference completed the break with the Tories and adopted the clear outline of an alternative policy in a resolution moved by the National Union of Mineworkers and

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seconded by the Amalgamated Engineering Union, which called for:

A positive Socialist foreign policy; the reunification of Germany by a Five Power agreement within the framework of a European Security Agreement; the admission at once of the People's Republic of China to the Security Council as a necessary preliminary to the solution of Asian problems; general discussions with the leaders of the USSR, China and the People's Democracies.

The background of this resolution, and particularly the resolutions passed at last year's Labor Conference and last month's Trades Union Congress, make it clear that Labor's policy is to unite Germany inside the United Nations but outside the rival alliances, in an all-European treaty based on the UN Charter and accompanied by an agreement to reduce, limit, and control European armaments and to withdraw all foreign forces from the territories of Germany and her neighbors. That policy of course knocks to pieces both NATO and the Warsaw Alliance.

Similarly, Labor's policy in the Middle East is to cooperate with the Soviet Union as well as the United States, through the UN, in granting economic and technical aid, keeping the peace, and controlling the traffic in arms. This policy obviously involves scrapping the Baghdad Pact and opposing the Eisenhower Doctrine.

Again in the Far East, Labor believes it is essential to cooperate with the People's Republic of China through the UN in order to settle outstanding issues and organize peace. That, of course, means abandoning SEATO.

In short, Labor has opted for transferring the relations of the great powers from the balance of power, expressed in rival alliances and a nuclear arms race, to the UN, through disarmament agreements and East-West regional arrangements based on the Charter. The basic assumption of the military alliances in the balance of power—NATO, SEATO, the Baghdad Pact, and the Warsaw Alliance—is that the other fellow wants war. The assumption on which the Charter is founded is that the great powers which are permanent members of the Security Council will always regard it as a lesser evil to settle their differences by peaceful means than to go to war. The H-bomb makes acting on this assumption the only alternative to the extinction of the human race.

It is not possible to base our relations with the Soviet Union simultaneously on some treaties that assume the USSR wants peace and on the other treaties that assume it wants war. That is why the inevitable corollary of the next Labor government's deciding to base its relations with the Soviet Union and China on the Charter is that

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we must seek ways to wind up the rival alliances and must meanwhile refuse to act on the military obligations of NATO, the Baghdad Pact, and SEATO without the authorization of the Security Council.

Labor's socialist foreign policy is indeed based on the view of the world and of our purpose in international affairs set forth by Attlee in the House of Commons on March 14, 1955, when he was still leader of the Labor Opposition:

Essentially, we should try to bring together the United States and Soviet Russia, because the greatest danger in the world is the complete separation of those two great powers, and the fact, which I think is true, that the Soviet Union fears the United States and the United States fears the Soviet Union—and fear is a bad counsellor."

The Tories, because they exist to preserve the existing social order, identify social unrest with Communism and Communism with Soviet aggression, and believe they can fight ideas with arms and alliances. We socialists know the challenge of Communism is social, not military, and that the only way to beat an idea is with a better idea. We are confident that democratic socialism is a better idea than Communism. We know that Nye Bevan was right when he said, on his return from the USSR, that the Soviet Union wants peace and dreads war as much as this country and the United States. Nye Bevan also put into words the fervent belief of the whole Labor Party, and millions outside the Party, when he said in the disarmament debate in the House of Commons, on July 23, as the spokesman of the shadow cabinet:

Ordinary men and women are becoming impatient of all of us when we are dealing with this problem [the H-bomb]. The fact is—let us face it—that most of the speeches that are made on both sides . . . on this subject make no sense at all to ordinary men and women. . . . The ends which are served by national defence and the means adopted for defence are so far apart from each other today as to add up to no sense at all. No one really believes that weapons which are weapons of mutual suicide are any longer means of national self-defence. We can talk about the subject as much as we like, but that is how the ordinary man and woman look at it, and that is true of the Conservative rank and file as well as of the Socialist rank and file. It just makes no sense.

The other day I heard a railwayman say that, having tried to follow the discussions about the subject on the radio, he had been reduced to the situation that he would now rather be defeated in a conventional war than victorious in a nuclear war, because, he said, "I should be alive maybe to endure the one, but I should not be alive to rejoice over the other." If we abandoned flatulent generalisations about the wide differences that

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separate the Soviet system from our own, most hon. Members would privately agree with that opinion. There cannot be any difference about social systems so profound that we are prepared to run the risk of wiping out the whole of human society over them.

Against that background and with those words ringing in their ears, the delegates at Brighton got a shock to hear Nye, as spokesman of the National Executive, put a labored, embarrassed case, garnished with fallacious arguments and lunatic-fringe power politics, for supporting the manufacture of H-bombs until we reach the final stage in a general disarmament convention—while deplored the stockpiling of nuclear weapons as an obstacle to international agreement, and agreeing we should suspend the testing of nuclear weapons unilaterally in order to give a lead for ending tests all round. He got his vote—5.5 million to 750,000—but it was even less representative than most such votes. For one thing, it was touch and go whether the one-million bloc vote of the Transport and General Workers would be cast for or against the platform. In the end it was cast for, but only because Frank Cousins was beaten in his Conference delegation by 16 votes to 11.

That vote is likely to be reversed at next year's Conference. Between then and now the campaign will go on within the Labor Party and the trade unions to bring our attitude to the H-bomb into line with our foreign policy and with our socialist outlook and purpose in the world. For this is an issue of conscience and moral principle, on which the Labor leaders know they cannot impose majority decisions on the minority, and the minority will not give over until this matter is settled right, even if we have been deserted—temporarily and under a tragic misapprehension, we hope—by the leader from whom we expected so much.

We have on our side facts, reason, the awakening moral sense of the nation and our socialist faith in human brotherhood. But our most powerful ally is sheer economic necessity. The National Executive promised the Brighton Conference that next year it would submit a "concrete and complete" policy to end inflation. That will probably be the same document as the promised report for the next Conference on central controls and planning. If so, all we can achieve, as long as defense expenditure remains at its present level, is a pale imitation of the "splendidly organized hunger" of Germany's meticulously planned war economy in World War I.

"Over the last five years, defence has on an average absorbed 10 percent of Britain's gross national product," says the 1957 *Defence White Paper*. "Some 7 percent of the working population are either in the Services or supporting them. One-eighth of the output of

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the metal-using industries, upon which the export trade so largely depends, is devoted to defence. An undue proportion of qualified scientists and engineers are engaged on military work. In addition, the retention of such large forces abroad gives rise to heavy charges which place a severe strain upon the balance of payments."

The brute fact is that unless the next Labor government massively reduces our armaments, no matter what anyone else does, it will not be able to stop inflation and all its promises and plans in home affairs will be worth less than the paper they are written on. That is the bedrock reality.

The elimination of communism would not eliminate the evil we see in communism. Indeed, it may safely be predicted that the waging of atomic war against the Soviet Union, far from providing a cure, would itself be a virulent, if not final, instrument for the destruction of liberty and the dehumanizing of men.

—American Friends Service Committee, *Speak Truth To Power.*

THE FORCE OF HABIT

At the end of the war Goodyear turned its attention to the long-lasting polyurethane rubbers . . . and in 1953 announced a polyurethane rubber of its own which it called Chemigum SL. With this rubber, Goodyear announced, it should be possible to build a tire that might outlast a car, or at least provide 100,000 miles of service.

Subsequently, Goodyear began to play down the potential use of the new rubber in passenger-car tires, saying that present tires, with treads of oil-extended GR-S, provide enough life—up to 40,000 miles—to more than meet the needs of the average motorist. Goodyear refuses to estimate the costs of a polyurethane-treaded tire, but it would certainly be several dollars above that of present tires. While it might seem that autoists would be glad to spend a few more dollars to get twice as much mileage, Goodyear claims this is doubtful, from what it knows of tire-buying habits. Premium tires, it says, are hard to sell. Goodyear's estimate of the situation could always be upset, of course, if a competitor should decide it was good business to introduce the startling new product.

—*Fortune*, March 1955, p. 166

THE WORLD OF SCIENCE

by Philip Morrison

Spider Webs, Drugs, and the Nature of Man

That humans were but one of a great chain of beings, stretching from the lowliest animalcule to the glorious invisible order of the angels, was an idea extended from Aristotle, not foreign even to the philosopher Locke. The material kernel of this notion became the content of Darwin's assault upon the confines of the Victorian mind. Nowadays the kinship of human and animal nature is commonplace, marked daily in medical practice by the purposeful sacrifice of mouse and monkey in the laboratory and the vaccine plant. It is less evident that the vital distinctions between the animal world and *homo sapiens* (or anyway *homo faber*—for I write as the 101st Airborne flies to Little Rock) can be discerned in laboratory experiment. But recently some of the deepest-lying studies of the psychiatrist have been set in an illuminating light by studies made upon garden spiders; the whole account seems to come very close to the beginnings of an answer to the ancient philosophical question: what is human nature?

The story begins on the grounds of the ancient University of Tübingen, where it may be that Dr. Faustus once lectured. There for twenty years the zoologist H. M. Peters and his colleagues have been trying to analyze the net-spinning of spiders. This wondrous feat of design has struck the fancy of men since earliest times. The Tübingen group has begun to have some insight into how the not very complex central nervous system of the spider can manage to achieve what appears to us a work of artifice far beyond the skills of so lowly a being.

It is helpful to describe how these scientists work. The grounds and the outside walls of the zoology building shelter a good number of small wooden frames, in each of which is a small paper bag. Within the bag dwells a spider of a common European species, called *Zilla x-notata*. *Zilla* spins nightly, if she is not too well fed, a beautiful symmetrical web stretched over the wooden frame. She lives happily within the bag at the edge of the web, rushing out to the web when she feels the tremor of a captured fly. The zoologists have taken moving pictures of her web-building; they have modified and

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disturbed webs in all stages of erection. Webs are so delicate they are impossible to handle, and difficult even to photograph. An ingenious scheme has been worked out to make the web photogenic by coating its gossamer strands with a fine white smoke of ammonium chloride; the spiders do not mind this, and the web stands out against a velvet background in the photographs which form the direct objects of study. Scores of the animals are active in the laboratory; thousands of webs have been photographed and the pictures carefully measured, segment after segment, to make clear the geometry of the web and its stages of construction.

Zilla works in this way: she stretches a bridge thread a few inches along the edge of her wooden frame. Then she drops with a thread from the center of the bridge, until she reaches a fastening point below. This step depends on the size and shape of the frame; it is not markedly uniform. But all the subsequent steps demonstrate the inborn pattern of behavior that mark her species; they are remarkably uniform by actual measurement. She climbs back up the vertical thread to its starting point, letting out a second thread about half-way up. Then she pulls the new thread tight some distance along the bridge from the first dropping point. This forms a radial spoke of the web. She repeats this time after time, until she has built a complete encircling frame of bridge threads, connected to the center by many radial spokes. The angle between adjoining spokes is well-controlled; it varies by only a couple of degrees in normal cases. Now she weaves a few irregular re-enforcing turns around the hub of her spokes. Then she climbs far out on a spoke and begins the main feature of the web: the so-called catching spiral. This is made of thread of special fineness, covered with a sticky fluid. She weaves the catching spiral from spoke to spoke, moving inward as she goes around, until she has at last built that wonderful spiral which so astonished and delighted the naturalist Fabre. She may end up with two dozen accurately-spaced spokes, wound about with thirty or forty turns of the catching spiral.

The spiral is not haphazard, as is the little central reenforcing-web. It has a lovely geometrical shape, found often in organic forms, called the logarithmic spiral. Along any radius, the distances to successive turns of the spiral maintain a constant ratio. Thus the turns come closer together as they wind closer to the center. This is demonstrable on the graphs of Peters and his colleagues; the "ideal" form is clear, and as clear are the deviations about the perfect shape.

Barred by the conventions of exposition from the use of formulae, and by the limitations of inexpensive printing from the use of graphs, diagrams, or photographs, I have felt it reasonable somewhat to simplify the story of the web, but without changing the main

points. These may be summed up as (1) the presence of several stages in construction, some of which reflect the accidental features of the environment and represent some sort of response of the spider to them; and (2) the invariable, inborn quality of such a step as the manufacture of the beautiful spiral, with its mathematical sophistication.

Of course the zoologists did not rest idle before the wonders of nature; spiders do not know logarithms, nor can they sense the web as a whole before building it. The wonderful spiral arises in a simple enough way: the spider makes of course no curved segments of web at all, but simply straight, taut threads. These threads take a course which does approximate the logarithmic spiral. (So does the shell of the chambered *Nautilus*, by the way.) But the mechanism is a simple one. The little spinner simply feels from her post, resting on one spoke, to the nearest point she can reach on the adjoining one. She stretches her thread to there; this operation of choosing the shortest way from spoke to spoke, given uniformity of spoke spacing, automatically approximates the logarithmic spiral, until she has gone in so far that she can touch the central re-enforcements.

Such an analysis is yet incomplete. It does not explain all the actions of the web-spinner. But it is typical for modern science in all branches: a complex whole, apparently indivisible, in fact arises by the quantitative repetition of many simpler elements. Quality has arisen for the observer, if not for Zilla, from the mere quantitative repetition of a simple act. This atomistic analysis is no naive reduction to the commonplace but a piece of genuine insight, especially in this context, where the complete web possesses properties beyond the ken of any spider. Zilla cannot in any way discern the center of the web when she begins to weave the spiral, and she surely is innocent of logarithmic intent.

One day after the war, the pharmacologist Peter Witt, now working in Bern, Switzerland, had a visit from his spider-studying zoologist colleagues. They wanted a stimulant drug from him—he was an expert on such drugs—to put Zilla to work more speedily, so that they could film her webs by daylight. He gave them some powerful agents; the spider fed on them, but its behavior was not hurried. Instead, Zilla spun a web of a pattern never before seen, new to her species. The web so made is the frozen record of behavior of the animal under the drug, permanent, objective. This chance result turned Professor Witt to the spider as his experimental animal, on whom he tries drug after drug, visualizing in the webs of the little bemused spinners what the effects of his drugs upon the central nervous system must be.

A few examples must suffice. The drug scopolamine, the so-

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called "twilight sleep" of the newspapers, destroys the nature of the spiral entirely. The spider no longer takes the shortest path; she weaves a smooth regular web, but her threads take a false direction, slanting in or out far too much. With benzedrine, however, the spiral structure is plainly present, but the random errors around the main pattern are much exaggerated. Zilla follows a very erratic path but one always centered about the expected spiral. With the potent drug called LSD (d-lysergic acid diethylamine tartrate) the web is perfect. It is not normal, but perfect. The small errors and deviations from the spiral path which are seen in every normal web are much reduced; the spiral and the spokes appear in their full geometrical purity. LSD makes the ordinary spinner a virtuosa; she constructs an all but ideal web.

Here is the crux; how can this be understood? For the drugs used all cause powerful effects upon the central nervous system and the mind of man: benzedrine, for instance, lowers felt needs, or at least the urgency to fulfill basic appetites; it is commonly used to defer sleep or to reduce hunger. Scopolamine induces sleep even in very small doses, but it is a sleep reached by an exaggerated and abnormal attention to inner states, to memory, imagery, fantasy, dream: hallucinations are not uncommon; memory of contemporary events is lost; but images of the past may be retained.

LSD is the most potent and remarkable drug of all; in amounts which can easily be scooped up on a common pinhead, it will for half a day turn a normal person into a clinical schizophrenic.

It is fascinating to follow the effects of LSD in a particular experiment. On rising, the healthy normal subject takes the dose, untasted in water. In an hour or so, numbness and tingling are noticeable in legs and arms. There is a tendency to a tremor; the handwriting becomes childlike. In two or three hours, the person may begin to laugh without restraint, to talk freely. Or he may be seized with a great anxiety and suspicion; he may withdraw anxiously into himself. Soon he loses contact with reality; one subject began to converse with a photograph of a person shown him as part of a testing procedure. But the IG tests show no important change; memory and comprehension seem unaffected. A bizarre theory may be elaborated in all sobriety to explain the hallucinations which now may crowd in. These are present for all the senses; a motor running may seem to be a symphony, the pulse of an artery against the pillow to be a movement of the pillow; water may taste salt; the "walls appear to pulsate and melt and they may appear to teem with insects." The subject may note the date and the time perfectly, but find them without meaning. He may regard himself as "out of time." At the peak, he may see a wildly mutating series of hallucinations.

One subject first heard a mouse running about. Then he saw the mouse, caught in a trap. Its tail was curved in an s-shape, which formed then the outline of a woman's body. Within each breast there appeared a human face; the faces multiplied until they filled his whole field of vision.

Such experiences are not as common as a pervasive anxiety, replaced by a kind of indifference, a feeling of unreality and apartness. Illusions of great beauty or of great terror were not experienced, nor any large delusions of grandeur or of persecution.

The psychiatrists unite in the judgment that these symptoms, which die away in a dozen hours, represent a compressed typical case of clinical schizophrenia, the disease which crowds our mental hospitals. As in the normal disease, the manifestations are of many kinds; both withdrawal and euphoria are experienced in LSD bouts and in the schizophrenic patient.

All these matters are evidently too complex to sum up precisely in a sentence; the mind is beyond such simplifications. But for our present purposes, it will not be too bold to attempt to characterize roughly what is going on. It seems fruitful to describe this state of schizophrenia, natural or induced, as a state of affairs in which reality, the world outside, has less and less hold on the patient. His reasoning powers, his logical ability and training, are applied not to the real world, but to a world of fancy, conjured up from the small cues still passed to him from outside and the many memories stored within. He tries to organize not the external stimuli but the internal images which crowd in on him. He does not withdraw to sleep, but remains aware, vividly concerned with experiences elaborated from the past.

Now think of the spinning spider. Her web grows under two influences: the instinctive behavior which organizes from within herself the beauty and function of the web, and her own response to the complex environment. It is plausible to say that the "errors," the deviations from the ideal plan, which are always present, are responses to many things: to a sound, a current of air, a variation in humidity or in the thickness of the thread she spins. Benzedrine blunts the strength of the inner drives; she spins a web rather more erratically. Scopolamine distorts the drives themselves, perhaps by illusions of touch, instead of vision as with men. But LSD, which makes men schizophrenic, makes a spider a more nearly ideal web-maker. Here is the grand lesson: a spider cut off from the outer world, responding only to her inner drives, can, at least when the wind is low and no predator nearby, succeed wonderfully at her most difficult task. For her most subtle act is to follow out the intricate inborn need to spin and to seek a shortest path. *But in man, the same drug,*

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which we can believe produces the same cut-off from the outside world, leads not to perfection, but to madness.

The price men pay for the great knot that is the brain is the need to feed it with experience. Cut it off from the stimuli of the real world, with their complex but orderly interrelationships, and it becomes mad. It runs feverishly on its own partial and disorderly memories, which reduce it to something far less than humanity, though it may still be reasoning, powerful, what we loosely call rational and self-conscious. Experiments of other kinds seem to bear this out. Persons isolated from all sensory impressions as far as may be, say by floating them submerged in a warm pool, feeding them air as they float in darkness, will in a few hours begin to build a hallucinatory world. LSD may do much the same thing; schizophrenia may stem from this same effect.

A disclaimer is perhaps in order. The drugs are not few in number; we cannot explain all their work, in spiders or far less in human beings. The whole subject is ramified and complex; the whole of our knowledge is new, growing, partial, disputed. But it seems to me that the bare outline here given, the comparison between man and spider, the suggestive origin of mental illness of one kind, the indication of the nature of the human psyche—these are lasting, if only partial and dim lights, kindled on the path to human self-understanding. It is no small feat that modern science can touch upon these high matters with a smoked spider web, a pair of dividers, and a speck of white powder.

The sources of this material are not hard to find. Popular articles are these:

For the spider web, Peter Witt in *Scientific American*, December 1954.

For LSD effects, six Boston psychiatrists in *Scientific American*, June 1955, p. 34. More technical accounts, with references, may be found in:

Witt, P. N., *Behavior* IV, 172 (1952); and in *American Journal of Psychiatry*, especially February 1952, (volume 108) (a symposium); and in a piece of Savage, in the same volume, page 896.

There is much more published on LSD in humans since that time, in a variety of journals, including *Harper's*.

Comments, criticism, and suggestions are still welcome, and are becoming less frequent!.

WORLD EVENTS

By Scott Nearing

Let's Think It Over

State Department attitudes toward world politics were summarized by the Secretary of State in an article which appeared in the October, 1957, *Foreign Affairs*. After referring to the "leading role" that history has made "inevitable" for the United States since 1945, the Secretary turns to the Major Premise of his argument:

United States foreign policy since 1945 has been forced to concern itself primarily with one major threat to the peaceful and orderly development of the kind of international community the American people desire. This is the threat posed by those who direct the totalitarian system of international Communism. . . . More than a decade of "cold war" experience has confirmed our earlier indictments of international Communism. It, and the governments it controls, are deeply hostile to us and to all free and independent governments.

Three items are cited in support of this statement:

Because orthodox Communism represents a materialistic and aethestic creed, it inevitably is repugnant to those who believe in the supremacy of the spirit. Because it seeks world rule through the domination of all governments by the international Communist Party, it is repugnant to all who understand its purposes and, as patriots, cherish national independence. And, because it employs fraud and violence to achieve its ends, it is repugnant to all who seek a world society of decency and order.

The Minor Premise is then stated: This threat can be successfully met only by "military capabilities to deter armed aggression and to cope with it if it should occur." Because of the interdependence of the present-day world, "security for one is only to be achieved through cooperation with like-minded nations prepared to meet the threat of international Communism."

The Conclusion from these two premises, the Secretary writes, is inescapable. "The United States, as the strongest nation in the non-Communist world, has had the major responsibility for meeting this challenge." "In 1945, the United States took the lead in organizing the United Nations. We hoped that it would become an effective instrument of collective security. But it still falls short of being that. United Nations action in a divided world has often been

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paralyzed." "Today we seek security through the strengthening of universal institutions, by regional arrangements, by maintaining military capabilities in conjunction with our allies, and by determined efforts to diminish the risk of surprise attack and to limit and control armaments."

Against the background of this logical structure, "the nations of the free world which felt endangered have felt it necessary to resort to collective, and usually regional, arrangements to safeguard their security. . . . In this development the United States has assumed a major role and responsibility. Since 1945 we have entered into collective-security treaties with 42 other nations and we have less formal arrangements with several more." In a word, Washington and its allies and dependencies have elected to fight the cold war to a successful conclusion.

Given the major and minor premises of the logical formula accepted by the State Department, the conclusion is inescapable, and war is the way out of a difficult and dangerous situation.

We have stated this position repeatedly in the pages of *Monthly Review*. Repeatedly we have been challenged on the ground that the Washington administration stands primarily for peace. Now we have a statement, on the highest authority, that Washington stands for peace, after the defeat of The Enemy. In the interim, Washington is consciously and persistently waging war.

Western policy-makers, faced with the political situation of 1945-1946, turned to war as the most effective way out—the cold war of the mid-1940s, the hot wars in Indo-China and Malaya, in Korea, over Suez, and in Africa. Western logic has led, not to peace and decency, but to the turmoil and insecurity of a decade of local wars, with the ever-present possibility that local war would detonate a third general military conflict.

There were other ways to deal with the delicate economic-political-social balance of 1945-1946. For example:

Major premise: The greatest danger facing mankind is the possibility of another general war.

Minor premise: War can be postponed, perhaps indefinitely, if the various existing ideologies and systems will agree to coexist where they cannot cooperate.

Conclusion: The next step toward world order and peace is self-determination within national boundaries, and in the international arena, a federation of the independent, sovereign nations, vested with sufficient delegated authority to establish and maintain peace.

This logical formula is historically superficial, but it contains pos-

sibilities of ending local wars, and working out non-military solutions for the numerous tension-conflict situations which remained after the cease-fire of 1945.

A more fundamental approach to the 1945-1946 situation would have been:

Major premise: Advances in the sciences and the corresponding technologies have rendered obsolete the economic, political, and social institutions and practices of the late 19th century, and plunged the entire apparatus of human culture into a revolutionary crisis.

Minor premise: The first task facing mankind is to discover the least costly and most efficient formula for extricating human society from its critical position and establishing a new social equilibrium, based upon the rationalization of mid-20th-century relations.

Conclusion: The peoples and nations, through conferences, commissions, investigation, discussion, compromise, and where necessary, arbitration, and through a campaign of re-education, must establish a balance between natural science and engineering, social science and engineering, public knowledge and public opinion, all on a world scale.

If the important task before mankind is to divide the world ideologically and politically, arm it to the teeth and fight a general war in which everyone will lose, the Secretary of State has the answer to the dilemma which is called the world crisis. All right-minded people should follow him to defeat and destruction.

If another general war, fought with guided missiles carrying atomic and nuclear charges, threatens the very existence of humanity on the earth and therefore is, by all means, to be avoided, the Department of State policy formula must be repudiated by all informed citizens and replaced by a rational and statesmanlike approach to the world crisis.

Postscript to the Above

Words are frequently used without a full realization of their meaning. We would urge the Secretary of State and other United States policy makers to open their dictionaries and check on the accuracy of four definitions.

Ignorance: lacking knowledge, education, or experience.

Prejudice: a judgment or opinion formed before the facts are known.

Superstition: any belief or attitude that is inconsistent with the known facts and laws of science.

Bigotry: holding blindly and intolerantly to a particular creed or opinion.

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If these definitions are accepted, the four italicized words certainly must be applied to the decisions of those United States policy-makers who are responsible for the continuance of the cold war and for the recent United Nations 47-27 vote (engineered by the United States delegation) to refuse consideration of the admission of the Chinese Peoples Republic into the United Nations during the current session of the Assembly.

Once More China

Last month we referred to an excellent, up-to-the-minute survey of China's economy—Solomon Adler's *The Chinese Economy*, published by Monthly Review Press. During the past thirty days we have been privileged to read a quite different report on China, written by Allyn and Adele Rickett, two American students attending Chinese universities who pleaded guilty to espionage and spent several years in Chinese prisons. In contrast with *The Chinese Economy*, *Prisoners of Liberation** is largely biographical. We would like to quote one revealing passage in which a Chinese cellmate of Allyn Rickett's, charged with counter-revolutionary activity, compares and contrasts the Old and the New China.

In the old days under the Nationalists, a person in jail just sat and rotted, and if he had been sentenced for more than three years his chance of coming out alive was very slim. If slow starvation didn't get him, sickness usually would. Now, under the People's Government, it is different. We are all criminals undergoing punishment, but the purpose of this punishment is not revenge, as it was in the old China, but education, so that some day we can return to society and start anew. However, this means that we must change our outlook on life so we won't try to repeat the mistakes we made before. Most of us became counter-revolutionaries and ended up here because we had spent our lives trying to get something for nothing at the expense of others. There is no place for such people in the new society. We must therefore re-examine our old ideas. In other words, we must reform our thoughts. The only way to do this is through study and mutual criticism in order to clarify in our minds right from wrong.

This is the outlook in a community which places social responsibility first and relegates personal freedom to a secondary place in its efforts to promote the general welfare.

A Big Lie

We were puzzling over the population figure for Taiwan (Formosa). Was it eight or nine millions? So we turned to the old re-

* Cameron Associates, 100 West 23rd St., New York, \$4.75.

liable *World Almanac* for 1957. We looked under "foreign countries" for "T." Taiwan was not there. We turned to Formosa. It wasn't there either. What a blunder, we thought, to leave out a country so much in the news. Then we had an inspiration, or, better said, a flight of fancy. We turned to "C." Sure enough, there it was, under China. We quote the opening paragraphs of the article. "Capital: Nanking; Provisional Capital: Taipei, Taiwan. Area, including out-lying territories: 3,760,339 square miles; China proper, 2,279,134 square miles. Population (census 1953): 601,912,371. [The poulation of Taiwan (Formosa) in 1955 was 9 million.] Flag: red with white sun in blue dexter canton. Monetary unit: New Taiwan dollar." In short, Taiwan is China.

What a whopper! What a horrible lie! Such false utterances are understandable in a Dulles speech. The Secretary of State was trained as a lawyer, not a geographer. Ambassador Lodge, with a straight face, can make such assertions in the United Nations, where he is among diplomats. But for a "book of facts" as the *World Almanac* sub-titles itself, to suffer such a lapse into mendacity is unforgivable.

Authoritarianism in the Saddle

The following passage is taken from the official transcript of Secretary of State Dulles' press conference of August 27th:

Question: Mr. Secretary, I'd like to ask you a question about the reporters going to Communist China. How do you regard American newspapermen? Do you think they are instruments of United States foreign policy?

Answer: I think that every American citizen has an obligation to be responsive to United States foreign policy in so far as that policy is legally and authoritatively expressed.

According to this line of thinking, once the Leader or the Oligarchy has spoken the Word, the loyal American citizen salutes and obeys. As for questioning, discussing, opposing—these concepts have been discarded by the United States Oligarchy as inconsistent with authoritarian rule.

Professor Haldane Migrates

London dispatches announce that a prominent British scientist, Professor J. B. S. Haldane, has left England. Professor Haldane was accompanied by his wife, Dr. Helen Spurway, also a geneticist and lecturer at University College, London. The Haldanes intend to settle in India.

At the airport, before his departure for India, Professor Haldane said that he wanted to live in a free country where there were no foreign troops based all over the place. Yes, he said, in answer to a question, I do mean the Americans. He added that he had nothing

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against Americans, but would feel the same way if the troops were German or French or from any other non-British source.

For a long time, Professor Haldane said, he had intended to leave Great Britain. The invasion of Suez in the autumn of 1956, in which Britain played a prominent part, made him feel that the time had come for him to move. In India he and his wife will both work and live at the Indian Statistical Institute in Calcutta. He has chosen India as his new home because he is an admirer of Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and because he felt that the mental climate of India would suit him better than that of any other country.

We are not concerned with Professor Haldane's long and distinguished scientific career, nor with his frequently-voiced disapproval of the British Way of Life. Nor are we questioning his desire to make his home in India. However, we would like to comment on his determination to migrate. Migration from Britain is not a recent development. Some of the earliest settlers in North America were British. Other British migrants went to Australasia, to Africa, and to Latin America. Nor is it surprising that in the present period of planet-wide unrest and upheaval, people should leave a densely populated country like Britain and seek their fortunes in a new world of other and perhaps wider opportunities.

Responding to such pressures, the most energetic, vigorous, dynamic, forward-looking, courageous elements in a population tend to move out, leaving the less vital elements to keep the home fires burning. If this process goes far enough, the region which is the victim of this disgenic selective process must deteriorate until it resembles Professor E. A. Ross's New England: "a fished-out fish-pond, with nothing left but bull-heads and suckers."

Britain is one of the most strategic areas of the world. Its climate is stimulating. Much of its soil is excellent. Its population possesses a wide range of technical skills. It has one of the world's best industrial-commercial complexes. Closely associated with a planned, functioning Eurasian economy and society, Britain could continue in the future, as in the past, to play a decisive role in world affairs. To do this, it must modify a way of life developed in the vanishing era of capitalist imperialism, and prepare to take its place in a socialist economy and society.

The transition stage through which Britain is presently passing calls for outstanding, determined, clear-eyed leadership on the Left. Professor Haldane can serve his fellows from his new home in India, where he is a guest, a stranger, and in a narrow sense, an alien. But would not he, and multitudes like him, who are contemplating a jump overseas, make solider contributions at their posts at home?

A New MR Press Book . . .

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(continued from inside front cover)

a virtual boycott by the capitalist press. It was therefore both a surprise and a pleasure to find the *New York Times* devoting a half page in its October 13th Sunday book review section to Philip Wittenberg's excellent book on the Lamont case (*The Lamont Case: History of a Congressional Investigation*, Horizon Press, 220 West 42nd, New York 36, \$5.00). The review, by Professor Edmond Cahn of the New York University Law School, is both balanced and favorable. Is this a sign of the times, or merely a lapse of the *Times*?

We have been asked to announce that Mr. Ashley King would like to get in touch with MR readers in the Binghamton area. His address is Post Office Building, Vestal, N. Y., and his telephone number Endicott 5-8642.

What promises to be a very interesting debate on the subject of "Free Enterprise or Socialism" will be held in Chicago on November 12th between Harry Braverman, co-editor of *The American Socialist*, and J. Bracken Lee, former governor of Utah. Time: 8 p.m. Place: 32 West Randolph. Admission: 90 cents (students 60 cents). Get tickets from Eugene V. Debs Forum, 208 N. Wells, Room 504.

The New England office of the American Friends Committee which has been doing a splendid peace education job, has just issued two excellent leaflets suitable for mass distribution. Entitled "Return to Human Decency" and "What Have We Silently Said 'Yes' To?", each sells for 5¢ a single copy, 25 for \$1, 100 for \$3. Order from your nearest AFSC regional office, or from P. O. Box 247, Cambridge 38, Mass.

The following excerpt from a thoughtful letter from a graduate student and long-time friend of MR points up one of the most baffling problems of the American Left:

I must say that most of my old friends are slowly turning away from political activity these days. Not going conservative in any conscious way, but feeling quite pessimistic, not knowing answers to many questions and, in general, trying to make careers for themselves without the added complications of political activity. I sense a feeling of futility, strengthened by the contradiction between a real political commitment and the need to support one's self and family in a professional field. Some of them are writing poetry and some are immersing themselves in their studies, but all sense the lack of a program. Anyway, that's my impression of the present condition of some young people, after college, who a few years ago were quite interested in politics and had developed a degree of sophistication about socialism.

Our correspondent, however, closes on a more hopeful note: "I am not, by the way, one of them," he says, "and have recently been active in the anti-bomb-test movement here. I also think some good can be accomplished in specific fields such as public power." Of course good can be accomplished, both generally and specifically. What Americans need to learn above all else is that history takes a long time and decisive movements always have small beginnings.

FLASH! Just as we were going to press, we received a cable from London accepting our offer to publish an American edition of *The South African Treason Trial*, by Lionel Foreman and E. S. (Solly) Sachs. This is an important and extremely timely book on the critical race situation in South Africa. Details next month.

We are including with this issue a questionnaire designed to help us expand our circulation and produce a better magazine. We would appreciate your cooperation in filling this out and sending it in right away. No signature or postage required

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